

THE PROBLEM  
OF  
DIMINISHING  
PREVALENT DESTITUTION  
AND  
TEMPTATIONS TO CRIME.

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NOTE.—While the following pages have been passing through the press, the French Government have modified the system of *livrets* there described, and the English Parliament has made progress with an Habitual Criminals Bill.

An admirable plan for diminishing mendicancy, by an extension of the “Blackheath Ticket System,” is also at present being widely advocated by Messrs. W. M. Wilkinson, H. M. Hart, and others. Further, the Government have taken steps to increase the facilities for forming provident habits, afforded by the Post-office Savings Banks and Insurance system. The friends of the poor, and employers of servants, workmen, and others, would often confer a lasting benefit by *explaining* and recommending the advantages and operation of the Post-office Bank system, especially in reference to secure insurance by easy payments, and the cheap provision for declining years offered by the arrangements for deferred annuities.

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## THE PROBLEM OF DIMINISHING PREVALENT DESTITUTION AND TEMPTATIONS TO CRIME.

THE circumstances of the present time specially warrant the diffusion of any information likely to assist the solution of the difficult social problem of diminishing prevalent destitution and temptations to crime. Hence the writer ventures to offer the following condensed summary of hints and conclusions collected from the experience and testimonies of many persons practically conversant with the subject.

### 1. SOURCES OR PERPETUANTS OF DESTITUTION.

#### COMPULSORY PUBLIC "CHARITY."

Of late years the operations of the Poor Law Board have greatly increased in expense. Its power also has been largely augmented, and, under its requirement, magnificent buildings have been erected throughout the country as being deemed needful for the care of the poor. The costs of the mere administration of legal relief have increased from £596,162 in 1853, to £730,704 in 1867, showing an addition, in 14 years, of £134,542. Since 1867 this augmentation has been still more rapid in consequence of recent legislation. The total Poor Law expenditure in England and Wales has grown from £5,880,000 in 1858, to £6,960,000 in 1867. Whilst the population has increased 7 per cent., pauperism has increased 9 per cent. throughout the kingdom. In the metropolis the increase has been excessive, indoor paupers having increased 60 per cent. in 10 years, and out-door



paupers 70 per cent. (In 1858 the in-door paupers in London were 20,525, and the out-door ones 52,378. In 1867 the former were 33,070 and the latter 89,384. In 1868 a still further increase took place.)

Such being the accompaniment of the extension of the authority of the Poor Law Board, it is no wonder that an impression is rapidly growing that the whole system, as at present conducted, is a *failure*. At a meeting of the Clerkenwell ratepayers, November, 1868, it was urged that "under the present system of the Poor Law Board extravagance and maladministration are unavoidable." At another meeting of Metropolitan ratepayers, in Shoreditch Town Hall, November 11, 1868, a resolution, supported by Mr. Charles Reed, M.P., energetically protested against the heavy pressure of the Poor Law as "*encouraging pauperism and sapping the spirit of self-dependence.*" One speaker described the Poor Law Board as being a "myth," inasmuch as the imposing idea associated with a national "Board" really represents a very few assistant secretaries and inspectors.

The present deplorable destitution in London and other large cities is a decisive proof of the partial failure of the existing system and the mode of its administration. Originally intended for the aged, the children and the disabled, the Poor Laws have in later times both perverted and prevented true charity, and absolutely fostered all the roots and causes of pauperism. "Why should we put by our earnings to save the parish?" replied a pauper to a clergyman who advised him to use the savings' bank. Provident habits, gratitude and industry are alike repressed and killed by the present system, which is at length resulting in huge waves of pauperism swelling with increasing volume every winter, and threatening to deluge the community with an overwhelming calamity.

Such is the natural consequence of a system which is

devoid of the means of extending *moral* assistance to the poor. Moral assistance includes the infusion of *energy* and *hope*, the communication of personal sympathy (tending to elicit gratitude), and the elevating influence of voluntary beneficence. These influences, essential to the effectual treatment of pauperism, are, however, incompatible with, and are obstructed by, a merely legal machinery such as the Poor Law System. That system is, at best, a precautionary expedient to prevent a greater evil—the neglect of voluntary benevolence to the extent of permitting starvation.

PROMISCUOUS OR CARELESS PRIVATE “CHARITY.”

It has been calculated by the Rev. J. B. Owen, that at least 25,000 families subsist by mendicancy in this country. At a low average of £1 per week per family, this indicates £1,300,000 *annually* devoted, for the most part, to perpetuate idle habits and to increase vice. As an illustration it may be mentioned that out of 18,000 tickets given by a benevolent association to street beggars, in London, for relief in case of satisfactory investigation, only one-fourth were returned to receive the relief, and half even of these cases were ascertained to be impostures or otherwise undeserving. Again, out of a large number of labour tickets distributed, only one twenty-third were eventually made use of by the applicants to one charitable society, and only one twenty-seventh by those of another. A striking individual example of the success of mendicancy was afforded by a woman who took away her two children from a school in which they had been charitably placed, and who, on being remonstrated with, replied, “Why, bless you, Sir, these children can earn eight shillings a day for me by begging!”

In many of the counties of England the evils of vagrancy are becoming intolerable, and in some



districts the greater proportion of crimes are committed by sturdy mendicants, whose numbers indicate a very extensive amount of public encouragement by the pseudo "charitable." Their behaviour is thus described by the Earl of Carnarvon (at Birmingham, October, 1868): "After some ghastly revel during the night, or some brawl in the morning, in which they tear up their clothes or throw the stones, which they are desired to break, at the heads of the workhouse authorities, they once more start upon their circuits with as much regularity as the judges who may have to sentence them, selecting those Unions where the discipline is slack or the diet generous."

It is hopeless to expect that the remonstrances often raised by thoughtful observers, against careless almsgiving will *prevent* the evil, but perhaps rather more discrimination and investigation may be urged with some prospect of usefulness.

The scriptural term "alms" does not imply mere careless encouragement to idleness and imposture, but a sympathising judicious assistance to the deserving poor. And, says De Gerando, "*Real* charity provides for the *future*. She not only relieves the present evil but endeavours to prevent the recurrence of it, by destroying its *causes*."

Even many of the excellently intentioned efforts made to relieve the distress in East London in 1867 and 1868, were wholly defeated in their object for want of attention to this principle. An energetic East End clergyman wrote to the Howard Association in November, 1868: "At present there is no one plan adopted at the East End for relieving the poor without pauperising them, which commends itself to me as satisfactory. The efforts of our Relief Association were a failure. Kindness of heart, wishing to relieve itself, prevailed against practical knowledge. They only relieved in the same old kind but mistaken way, and we have, as

usual, a residuum of *increased* pauperism. Year by year the whole East End is becoming pauperised, and, hitherto, the Associations have increased this class." The efforts of charitable individuals have, with very slight exception, been directed to the mere temporary gift of money, food or clothes. These gifts have in many cases been greatly abused. Gangs of impostors obtain an abundant living by going from one centre of distribution to another, and securing a constant supply of tickets or alms. The habitual beggars have formed a regular organisation for co-operation in obtaining the funds and gifts arising from the various local distributions or endowments for alms-giving. Rents have risen from the rush of such applicants to certain specially favoured districts. Dr. Hawkesley, in a paper recently read at the Social Science Association, has shown that the aggregate of charitable endowments in London alone amounts to about seven million pounds per annum, a sum which is sufficient, if rightly distributed and guarded from abuse, to render poor-rates superfluous, at least in the metropolis.

Not only seven, but fourteen or twenty-one, millions might be annually bestowed upon the poor without any real charity or effectual amelioration of their condition. Such real amelioration can only be secured by the accompaniment of *moral and religious personal* influence. The good that is done springs from these sources, whether lay or ministerial, public or private. But how much remains to be done is sadly evident from the great improvidence of so many of the poor who squander their earnings in drink and reckless self-indulgence, taking no thought for the future, and making no provision for its contingencies. Of course there are many honourable exceptions. Another unfavourable feature is the adoption of foolish and unreasonable regulations by some of the great trades unions. Hence, in a time of much distress in England,



master carpenters have to import their framework, &c., from Norway, and manufacturers their machinery from Belgium, and even from America. As to the prevalence of improvidence amongst the poor, it is notorious that many working men whose families are in squalour and destitution, have for years previously been in the receipt of much larger incomes than the majority of curates, clerks, and school teachers, who, nevertheless, manage by prudent thrift to maintain a respectable appearance. Mr. (Deputy) Elliott in a paper read before the Statistical Society, June, 1868, says: "The dietary of a mechanic in the east of London, where there is *now* much poverty, earning from 36s. to 40s. per week, was in 1865 thus: he goes to work at 6, taking a dram of rum; breakfast at 8, tea or coffee, eggs and bacon; luncheon at 10.30, bacon, mutton-chops, or sausages, with beer; dinner at 1, meat, bread, potatoes, beer; at 3 to 3.30 a dram, usually of rum; 4.30 he goes to tea; home for the evening at 6, unless extra hours at extra rate of payment; supper at home, sometimes of hot meat or poultry." He adds—"Others in the same district would go into a public-house on Monday, throw down 20s., and order four bottles of sherry, and, returning to work on Tuesday, would boast that since Saturday they had been living at the rate of £1,000 a-year." Yet these men and their families make, in most cases, no provision for the future, and expect the provident, the temperate, and the self-denying to extend liberal assistance when that distress arrives which is the natural (and sometimes only curative) result of such profligate and wicked heedlessness.

It is the neglect of the practical consideration and *moral* treatment of these evils of improvidence and of multiplied temptation to drink which forms one of the most deplorable features of our present extensive promiscuous "charity."



Again, in many of the towns and villages throughout the land, it is notorious that in consequence of various endowments for dispensing gifts to the inhabitants, irrespective of moral influences and industrial desert, there is far *more* both of destitution and vice (and of a permanent character), than in places where no such well-meant, but misdirected “charities” exist.

LEGALISED CULTURE OF THE SEEDS AND ROOTS OF PAUPERISM  
AND CRIME.

Any ordinary remedial measures must, to a considerable extent, be nullified when the seeds and roots of evil are fostered rather than repressed by the powers that be. But is not this largely the case with both Pauperism and Crime? Their causes are admitted to be, mainly, filthy Overcrowded Dwellings, Intemperance, Improvidence, and Ignorance. The two former, at least, of these causes are specially fruitful in mischief, whilst at the same time greatly fostered by legalised facilities. As to intemperance, it is positively enforced and *necessitated* by Law in innumerable instances. The absence of religious influences is not here named as a cause of crime or destitution, though primarily connected with both. But intemperance and filthy overcrowded dwellings greatly prevent the very entrance and initiation of religious influences, to say nothing of their obstacles to the development of such. They are like the stagnant water upon undrained lands, which must be drawn off before good seed can be sown with any advantage.

Firstly,—as to demoralising, overcrowded and grossly unhealthy dwellings—Dr. Hunter, of the Privy Council Office, says :—

“There are about twenty large colonies in London of about 10,000 persons each, whose miserable condition exceeds almost anything I have seen elsewhere in England, and is almost entirely the result of their bad house-accommodation.”

He adds (in a letter to Dr. W. Rendle, of Southwark), a reason of the present overcrowded condition of many districts: "The land belongs perhaps to a duke; he has let perhaps on a 500 years' lease to a college; the college has let on a building lease; the lessee has sub-let to ten builders; each builder has mortgaged his lot; in half the mortgagee is in possession; in the other half there have been perhaps four different sub-lettings for periods of ten, six, four, or two years short of the termination of the lease. Then comes the speculative buyer who buys in the name of a man of straw, gets all he can, and fails to execute the covenants. All the while an agent collects rents and is paid. The agent employs one of the tenants as sub-agent, and he is paid. The result is that the working man maintains a dozen landlords, pays a dozen rents, while no one has sufficient stake in the property to mend a hole in the water-butt."

Of course the Legislature cannot be expected to interfere with the just rights of property or to forbid sub-leases. But it may justly be called upon to protect the poor from the dangers of such a system as Dr. Hunter describes. It should enact and stringently carry into execution, decisive measures of supervision and sanitary control. Fever-dens of vice and filth should be, at any inconvenience to the owners, really extirpated. But at present the condition of myriads of houses is so devoid of drainage or of water supply, as to be truly, though inelegantly, described in the words of a poor tenant of one of these styes:—"Upstairs or down it's mostly the same, for at times the stink fairly knocks you down." There being often no pure water, the gin-shop must perforce be resorted to, and the gin-shop is half-way, or more, towards the prison. Further, there being no provision for domestic decency, chastity becomes a virtual impossibility, and oftentimes vice unutterable ensues. There also ensue unhealthy childhood, diseased manhood, helpless poverty, spiritless or semi-idiotic dispositions, and premature death.

Sir Walter Crofton and Mr. T. B. Ll. Baker



earnestly demand, and rightly so, a vigorous system of supervision over habitual criminals and the repression of crime by longer sentences admitting of the formation of better habits. Mr. Baker has advocated useful prison industry for the confined criminal (a most important measure, in which Sir Walter has unfortunately evinced little interest). But valuable and essential as repressive and reformatory criminal treatment indubitably is, it requires to be accompanied by the removal of the crime-nurseries of the innumerable dens and styces above alluded to.

Secondly, as to Intemperance. Whilst much of this is caused by filthy tenements, it, in turn, largely creates the condition of the latter. Of what value is the increasing desire on the part of some magistrates to secure respectability as the condition of public-house licences, whilst the excise officers continue to license beer-houses without any limitation, and with the sole object of increasing the revenue, irrespective of the consequent increase of crime and immorality? "Men cannot be made moral by Act of Parliament." This stale dictum is true enough. But it is also true that they *can* be, and *are*, abundantly, made *immoral* by Act of Parliament. The nation is immensely over-licensed. A magistrate (Mr. T. B. Ll. Baker) justly remarked recently: "A working man might get past four or five public-houses on his way home, but could not get past eight or nine." And Dr. Guthrie says of London: "Every corner presenting temptations to vice, the sight often reminds me of one of our Scotch rivers, nets here and nets there: the poor salmon has hardly a chance of escape." Refreshment is one thing, wholesale solicitation to drunkenness is another; but the latter is at present the *legalised system*.

The evil is still worse in regard to the numerous pernicious places *doubly* licensed for drinking halls and casinos, in some of which the utmost facilities for



vice are afforded, and the moral footing of their frequenters is necessarily rendered as slippery as ice.

All ratepayers should perseveringly bestir themselves, even on economic grounds, to lessen these evils. They entail a huge bill every year for the expenses of workhouses, prisons, asylums and hospitals. The nature and amount of legislative remedy will depend entirely on the proportion and continuance of outside pressure, individual and collective.

## II.—REMEDIAL AGENCIES AND SUGGESTIVE EXPERIENCES.

### FRENCH AND PRUSSIAN SYSTEMS OF POOR RELIEF.

Much has often been urged in favour of an entirely voluntary system of relieving the poor. Such a system has been adopted for two centuries by the Society of Friends with remarkable efficiency and completeness. The London Jews have also adopted a somewhat similar plan since 1859, consisting of a volunteer Board of Guardians, subdivided into Committees for Relief, Visitation, Employment, and Medical Aid. This, too, has worked very advantageously so far as carried out.

Another notable plan of relief was that instituted by Dr. Chalmers, in St. John's parish, Glasgow, and successfully acted out for about eighteen years (1819–1837). By means of voluntary committees and active deacons, a parish of 10,000 people, containing the poorest population in Glasgow, was effectually relieved at an average cost of about £400 a year; while a similar population in the Canongate parish cost £900. Meanwhile, the comfort of the poor was not diminished; their industry, frugality, and self-help were greatly increased by moral influences and personal persuasion; the private charity of relatives and of neighbours was often stimulated, and the disposition to depend on systematic aid was much lessened. The

system, after nearly twenty years' continuance, was allowed to lapse, inasmuch as its voluntary supporters were still obliged by law to contribute other funds for the poor around, and also because of certain local discouragements. But it proved the practicability, on a considerable scale, of a plan far superior, both in moral effect and in economy, to a mere compulsory Poor Law machine.

If all men were Christians, under the influence of Dr. Chalmerses, or united in religious denominations so well and compactly regulated as the Society of Friends and the London Jews, then voluntary committees of visitation would constitute the long-needed solution of the great poverty problem. (Such a solution was also exemplified in the earliest days of the primitive Apostolic Church at Jerusalem.) But in our days the charitable and the apathetic are so intermingled, the irreligious and the indifferent so predominate, that Poor Laws cannot be wholly dispensed with. They constitute an evil which must, in some form, be retained to prevent a worse one—that of extreme neglect and starvation.

But if any plan can be, with tolerable facility, put in operation, *combining* the moral and economical advantages of the voluntary system with the comprehensiveness and certainty of a legal executive organisation, then the difficulty will be solved. *Such a system has long been carried out, with good effect, in parts of Prussia and France.*

For example, at Elberfeld, in Rhine Prussia, a town of 65,000, a large voluntary committee of about 300 members, acting in *co-operation* with the municipal and government officials, have for fifteen years exerted such a useful influence upon the poor of the town as to reduce the proportion of paupers from 10 per cent. in 1853 to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in 1868. The few paid officers and the many voluntary committeemen work harmo-



niously under an able superintendent. The family ties of the poor are cherished, self-help is insisted upon wherever practicable, industry is aided, whilst idleness and imposture are tested and repressed. The poor are duly classified, as orphans, sick, lunatics, &c., and not mingled promiscuously together, but provided for in separate institutions. Two-thirds of the relief extended is raised by taxes, and the remainder by voluntary contributions.

In Paris and other French towns, similar voluntary committees act under the direction of the Mayors and their paid secretaries. These, together, form the “Bureaux de Bienfaisance.” Every application for relief, whether medical or pecuniary, leads to personal visitation and inquiry *at the homes* of the poor. The aged, the orphans, the sick and disabled are considered to be the *only* objects for public charity. But even these are not supported in a manner which would tend to discourage habits of providence and foresight in the community. One-tenth of the French public relief arises from voluntary offerings, put into boxes at certain stations, and the remainder from national funds and public endowments. This system was established in 1816, and in the first sixteen years it reduced Parisian pauperism one-half.\*

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\* The French have also established a very efficient system for the repression of idleness, dishonesty, and imposture, which works admirably, and which has prevented an enormous amount of crime. Under its operation France enjoys much freedom from the vagrancy, the theft, and the deception which are so rife in England. We allude to the system of *mayoral certificates*, or “*livrets*” with which every servant or workman in France is obliged to provide himself or herself. Every one thus employed, and every person going about seeking alms or employment, is required to produce, on demand, this “*livret*.” This paper contains a statement of the occupation, employer, and time of service of its holder. No servant unprovided with such a paper may be engaged by any



Dr. Stallard says (January, 1869): “Do not suppose that the actual relief given in Paris is less than it is here because the *money* expenditure is less. (English paupers cost £7 each, French paupers £1 each.) Nothing of the kind. I know the French system; and if I have a fault to find with it, it is, that it helps too much and not too little. For it gives in almost everything but money with a freedom of which we have no conception here. In fact, a whole army of charitable people are employed, not to give a paltry dole of money as we do, but *sympathy*, advice, and *personal assistance* of a character which money will not buy.”

Neither in France nor Prussia is to be witnessed the spectacle—as in Great Britain—of a demoralising Poor Law system, and a collateral but wholly separate array of irregular, isolated, undisciplined, though excellently intentioned, voluntary agencies. Both agencies, law and private beneficence, are there united in *combined* action and *mutually regulate* each other.

Here then is indicated the long-needed practical solution of the difficult problem of English pauperism. Both Local and Parliamentary action are, however, essential to establish and define the conditions of such a system as a means of superseding the existing compulsory and purely legal machinery. The Mayors of towns would probably be found in England, as in

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employer under a penalty of from £20 to £40. Imposition and forgery of signature are prevented by the requirement of a mayoral “visa” for the signature of every employer. Any person going about without a properly signed paper incurs a sentence of one year’s imprisonment and five years’ police supervision. On the other hand, every one provided with a satisfactory paper is aided, if necessary, by the mayoral or police authorities in obtaining employment, or in procuring public charity or maintenance in case of sickness and infirmity.

France, the best links between voluntary benevolence and State administration, in any such arrangement that may be attempted.

RELIEF BY LABOUR IN PIECE-WORK AT LOWER RATES OF PAYMENT  
THAN ORDINARY INDEPENDENT INDUSTRY OBTAINS.

All experience indicates that any system of publicly provided labour for the poor must be so regulated and so remunerated as not to compete, to any considerable extent, with independent self-aid and industry. Otherwise there would result an overwhelming rush of applicants whose numbers would lead to utterly unmanageable difficulties. Very crude and impracticable propositions have often been put forth in advocacy of public works apart from necessary precautions and limiting conditions. Those propositions, if attempted, would lead to Socialism, and to confusion worse confounded.

The north of England has furnished practical examples of the judicious relief of destitution by piece-work, not too highly paid, in Lancashire on a very large scale, and at Wakefield on a very limited one.

*The Lancashire Distress Relief*, in the time of the *Cotton Famine*, so well administered by voluntary Local Committees under the able counsels of the Government Commissioners, Messrs. Robert Rawlinson and R. A. Arnold, has recently been described in detail by Mr. Arnold, in a very valuable essay (published by the Social Science Association, November, 1868). £1,850,000, chiefly borrowed under the Public Loan Act, was spent in public works, including parks at Oldham, Bolton, and Preston, reservoirs and water-works at Manchester, Wigan, and Bolton, cemeteries, markets, or gasworks at Macclesfield, Accrington, Bury, &c. Two-thirds of the above sum was devoted to the construction of drains and roads. Piece-work, at a lower rate than ordinary wages, was found an *indispensable* condition. For where, at first, relief



was given without work, many preferred to lie in bed most of their time on an allowance of half-a-crown a week rather than earn 10s. or 15s. by labour. Work paid by time of occupation, caused such indolence that earth-work only worth 2d. per yard was dawdled over (the men lying down at times in their barrows) until the time claimed for raised the payment of the same to 4s. per yard! Similar abuses were experienced at Bethnal Green in 1868, when occupation (paid by time) was found for the unemployed, in street-sweeping. But the eventual general adoption of relief by piece-work saved Lancashire from starvation, fostered trade and self-effort, and further acted as a *test which drove away multitudes of idle beggars* to prey on less enlightened counties of England.

The application of this plan to East London and similar districts, would be eventually more economical and more morally efficient than wholesale relief without industry, the hasty doles issued, without discrimination, by Guardians, to scrambling crowds, or the unequal, and often degrading test of the stone-yard.

*Emigration by public aid* is at best a temporary shift which does not act as a *preventive* of the causes of destitution. At any rate such emigration is best effected by the partial self-help of the industrious and energetic, rather than by wholly external aid in pushing off the otherwise helpless and already pauperised, to a land where their former habits will accompany them.

*The Wakefield Home for discharged prisoners* is an *entirely self-supporting* institution, which has solved, on a small scale, a very important social problem, applicable both to discharged prisoners and to the destitute honest poor. Here, again, *piece-work at lower wages than independent labour* is the primary principle of aid. In 1867 it gave employment (chiefly in mat-making) to 146 men, and after paying all costs, salaries, board and lodging, cleared



£280 profit. It is desired to give each inmate the opportunity of earning, by useful hard labour, about 8s. a week ; but so anxious are the men to procure a little money over and above the cost of their maintenance (about 7s. per week), that by dint of working long hours (about twelve per day) their *average* weekly earnings are 11s. per week. A few earn 15s. or upwards. Discharged convicts have walked from Portland to Wakefield to get work here, and have been greatly disappointed at finding that it was (unavoidably) restricted to West Riding men. The principle is one which deserves wide imitation.

#### INDUSTRIAL FEEDING SCHOOLS.

Great success has followed the establishment, in several Scotch cities, of Industrial Feeding Schools for the children of the very poor. These schools attract numbers who would otherwise grow up in ignorance and vice. They secure some of the advantages of compulsory education without the difficulties of the latter. Attendance is ensured by means of food, such as porridge, bread and milk, or a dinner. The school hours are divided between book-work and manual labour at making shoes, boxes, clothes, or cutting wood, &c. Abiding habits of industry and virtue are thus formed in many instances, and at an expense of only £2 or £3 per child. This system has great advantages over the expensive boarding-school reformatories (the boys at Redhill Reformatory cost from £40 or £50 each per annum!) and not merely corrects, but *prevents* vice. Feeding schools might very advantageously be established in every city and town.

#### RIGOROUSLY ENFORCED SANITARY INSPECTION.

Permissive enactments for local boards are worse than useless where they are not enforced. Notwithstanding a very few instances of the compulsory

destruction of unhealthy dens in London (under Mr. Torrens' Act of 1868), it is too evident that the power of avaricious speculators and of the constructors of the undrained, foetid, styelike dwellings, grouped in thousands in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, &c., will, *in general*, set sanitary statutes at defiance unless these are *enforced* by inspectors responsible only to the *central* government. Officers armed with such power are therefore urgently needed.

#### DIMINUTION OF LICENSED TEMPTATIONS.

Amid the sharply contested and diverse plans for lessening the evils of Intemperance, as the Permissive Bill on the one hand, and the free sale of liquor without licence on the other, it is very difficult to suggest a means of progress which shall commend itself to the nation generally. Probably the most practicable suggestions are the five following :—1. To give the ratepayers in every locality a voice in the granting and refusal of licences. 2. To adopt the proposal of Mr. T. B. Ll. Baker that “a gentle screw should be put on the public-houses” by increasing the cost of licences until “they might gently squeeze out a considerable number of them.” 3. To withdraw entirely the licensing power of the Excise officers. 4 and 5. The adoption of the two propositions made by Rev. J. Clay to a parliamentary committee, in 1852, “To render all retail drink-debts irrecoverable;” and “To prohibit theatrical and musical entertainments in places licensed to sell drink.” The enactment of these means would immensely reduce temptation and crime, whilst not unduly interfering with the moderate use of the beverages licensed to be sold. The diminution of rates for asylums, prisons, workhouses, coroner's inquests, &c., would be as marked in consequence.



## INCREASE OF LAY AUXILIARIES TO MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL.

Whilst there is nothing so calculated to infuse hope into the despairing, and energy into those who are paralysed by destitution, as the reception of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ and the hopes of his Gospel, abundant experience has shown that, as of old, the ministers of religion should “not leave the word of God and serve tables,” lest they unintentionally foster the worst hypocrisy. Dr. Guthrie and other experienced ministers are very emphatic on this point, viz. the delusion of those who think that a preacher is more likely to convert the poor when he gives this one half a crown, and the other five shillings. The anxiety for the shillings is very apt to lead to the neglect of the prayers and the good counsel. Material aid requires more investigation and regulation than an actively-engaged spiritual adviser can find time for. Hence the importance of being able to refer this department of beneficence to judicious lay committees, deacons, deaconesses, or other auxiliary visitors who may combine shrewdness and practical wisdom with piety and benevolence.

NOTE.—The important subjects of the *reformatory* and *preventive* influences of Remunerative Prison Labour, and of a central supervision of all persons who can show no satisfactory evidence of leading an honest life, are too comprehensive to be treated of in a brief condensed paper like the present. The kindred questions of the repression of crime by means of a Public Prosecutor—such as the Scotch Procurator Fiscal—and the supervision of Crime Capitalists (the owners of the habitual haunts of criminals, and the receivers of the fruit of their depredations), must also only receive a passing mention here, although intimately connected with the scope of this paper.